

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-37 (Cancelled).

Claim 38 (New): An NC/Nga mouse that has been sensitized with a mite extract by multiple sequential injections of mite antigen over a period 18 days or less in a pathogen-free environment,

wherein said mouse exhibits at least one symptom of severe dermatitis in a shorter period of time than a conventional NC/Nga mouse; or

wherein said mouse develops dermatitis lesions sufficiently severe for evaluating the effectiveness of a medicine by day 18.

Claim 39 (New): The NC/Nga mouse of Claim 38, which exhibits at least one symptom of severe dermatitis in a shorter period of time than conventional NC/Nga mice.

Claim 40 (New): The NC/Nga mouse of Claim 39, wherein said symptom is a skin lesion on the ear(s) of the mouse.

Claim 41 (New): The NC/Nga mouse of Claim 38, which develops dermatitis lesions sufficiently severe for evaluating the effectiveness of a medicine by day 18.

Claim 42 (New): The NC/Nga mouse of Claim 38, which develops skin lesions characterized by erythema, edema, excoriation, and/or scaling.

Claim 43 (New): The NC/Nga mouse of Claim 38, which develops skin lesions characterized by erythema.

Claim 44 (New): The NC/Nga mouse of Claim 38, which develops skin lesions characterized by ear swelling.

Claim 45 (New): A method of producing the NC/Nga mouse of Claim 38, comprising:

maintaining a NC/Nga mouse in a specific pathogen free environment and sensitizing the ear(s) of the mouse with the mite extract.

Claim 46 (New): The method of Claim 45, wherein the mouse is sensitized with the mite extract for at least 5 days.

Claim 47 (New): A method of screening for an agent for effectiveness against atopic dermatitis, comprising:

applying at least one agent to the mouse of Claim 38,
determining whether the agent reduces one or more symptoms of atopic dermatitis,
correlating a reduction in said one or more symptoms with effectiveness of said agent against atopic dermatitis, or
correlating a lack of reduction in said one or more symptoms with ineffectiveness of said agent against atopic dermatitis.

Claim 48 (New): The method of Claim 47, wherein said determining comprises measuring the affected areas of the mouse.

Claim 49 (New): The method of Claim 47, wherein said determining comprises measuring the affected areas at the ventral sides of the ears of the mouse.

Claim 50 (New): The method of Claim 47, wherein said determining comprises measuring anti-Dp-specific IgG levels in said mouse.

Claim 51 (New): The method of Claim 47, wherein said determining comprises measuring the concentration of at least one cytokine in said mouse.

Claim 52 (New): The method of Claim 47, wherein said determining comprises measuring degranulation of mast cells in said mouse.

Claim 53 (New): The method of Claim 47, wherein said determining comprises measuring eosinophil infiltration in said mouse.